

V. REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 5 and 7 are rejected under 35 USC 102 (b) as being anticipated by Kanji et al. (Japan Publication No. 2002-203657). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

It is respectfully submitted that JP 657 does not disclose the following features:

- 1) the use of capillary carrier;
- 2) the capillary carrier has a liquid collecting end; and
- 3) the steam supply feeds the steam to the liquid collecting end.

In the embodiment of FIG. 4 of this reference w, the steam is introduced into an air passage (5) through a duct (26) disposed upwardly of a discharge electrode (2), and is forced by a fan (7) to be guided between the discharge electrode (2) and an opposed electrode (3).

As is apparent from the disclosure of the reference, the discharge electrode is not configured to have the liquid collecting end and to feed the liquid therethrough to the discharge end. Further, the steam is not supplied to the liquid collecting end of the capillary carrier.

Accordingly, the device of the reference cannot achieve the claimed feature that "a steam supply feeds the steam to the liquid collecting end of the carrier for condensation of the liquid therearound in order that the condensed liquid is fed through the carrier to the discharge end".

It is respectfully submitted that the above feature of claim 1 cannot be derived from the reference. Furthermore, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection is improper because the applied art fails to teach each and every element of claim 1 as described above. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 is allowable over the applied art.

Claims 2, 5 7 depend from claim 1 and include all of the features of claim 1. Thus, the dependent claims are allowable at least for the reason claim 1 is allowable as for the features they recite.

Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

As indicated in the Office Action, claims 3, 4 and 6 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the features of the base claim and any intervening claims. The claims are amended in this manner and, as a result, are now in condition for allowance.

Further, Applicants assert that there are also reasons other than those set forth above why the pending claims are patentable. Applicants hereby reserve the right to submit those other reasons and to argue for the patentability of claims not explicitly addressed herein in future papers.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration of the application and allowance of the pending claims are respectfully requested. Should the Examiner believe anything further is desirable in order to place the application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' representative at the telephone number listed below.

Should additional fees be necessary in connection with the filing of this paper or if a Petition for Extension of Time is required for timely acceptance of the

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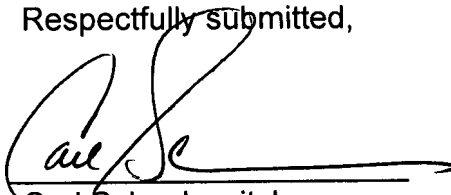
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same, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 18-0013 for any such fees and Applicant(s) hereby petition for such extension of time.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: May 2, 2007

By:


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Enclosure(s): Amendment Transmittal

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